

## REMARKS

In the Office Action dated March 21, 2006, claims 1-42 are pending, claims 21-30 and 37-42 are allowed, claims 1, 10, 11 and 20 are rejected, objection is made to claims 6, 7, 16, 17 and claims 2-5, 8, 9, 12-15, 18, 19 and 31-36 are withdrawn from consideration. Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter at least in claims 6, 7, 16, 17, 21-30 and 37-42.

Claims 6, 7, 16 and 17 have been rewritten in independent form. Claims 1, 10, 11 and 20 are cancelled to facilitate prosecution of this application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of these claims in a continuation application.

Claims 1 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Sugimoto et al. (US 5,565,899; "Sugimoto"). Sugimoto describes a ink jet apparatus having an ink passage divided into regions by a filter. Figs. 17 and 20 show the ink supply tube 1600 connecting the print head and the ink container 1100. There is a first mesh filter 700 at the entrance of the ink supply tube 1600 where the head chip joins the ink container 1100. Fig. 17 also shows a second filter 700a (also illustrated as a mesh filter). At col. 19, Sugimoto describes that {t}the meniscus retaining force [of the mesh filter 700a] is stronger than the negative pressure of the absorbing material 900, and therefore, the ink is retained in filter 700a, so that ink is not retracted in the filter 700a.

There is no teaching or suggestion in Sugimoto that "the ink supplying path therein includes a filter, which generates negative pressure when the ink is supplied, the negative pressure being smaller than ink absorbing pressure of a nozzle of the print head," as claimed herein. See, e.g., Ref. No. 1a, in present Fig 21(a).

USSN 10/767,750

Inventors: Matsushita et al.

Attorney Docket No. 60716(70904)

Page 25 of 26

Thus it is not seen how the present invention, as set forth in claims 1 and 10, are anticipated or would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of Sugimoto.

Claims 11 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Saikawa (US 6,158,855) in view of Sugimoto et al. Saikawa describes an ink jet head having a filter chamber in the ink passage wherein the filter chamber is provided with a bubble moving portion for moving bubbles away from the inlet opening. Saikawa states that there is a pressure drop across the filter of 15 kPa and the minimum threshold pressure for transmission of bubbles is 18kPa. (See column 6, lines 60-67)

There is no teaching or suggestion in Saikawa that the ink supplying path therein includes a filter, which generates negative pressure when the ink is supplied, the negative pressure being smaller than ink absorbing pressure of a nozzle of the print head, much less a teaching or suggestion that the filter generate a negative pressure of less than 2kPa, as claimed herein. As discussed above, Sugimoto also has no teaching or suggestion for the presently claimed invention.

Thus it is not seen how the present invention, as set forth in claims 11 and 20, would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of any combination of Saikawa and Sugimoto.

In view of the discussion above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. An early reconsideration and notice of allowance are earnestly solicited.

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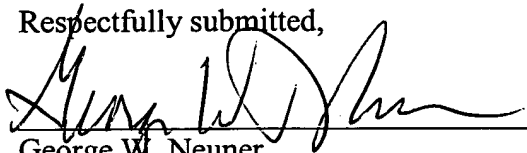
Page 26 of 26

If for any reason a fee is required, a fee paid is inadequate or credit is owed for any excess fee paid, the Commissioner is hereby authorized and requested to charge Deposit Account No. 04-1105.

Date:

9 June '06

Respectfully submitted,



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